

**North Cumberland Fire District**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**September 15, 2010**

**Present:**

**Edward LeBlanc, Chairman**

**John Aharonian**

**Robert Audette**

**Brian Campbell**

**Matthew Gannon**

**Paul Lindquist**

**John Patrick McCoy**

**Michael Spaziani**

**Absent:**

## **Others Present:**

**Fay Dakake, Clerk**

**Martin Klara, Tax Collector**

**Robert J. Murray, Treasurer**

**David DelVecchio, Chief**

## **Opening:**

**The regular meeting of the North Cumberland Fire District (NCFD) was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 15, 2010 by Chairman LeBlanc.**

## **A. Approval of the Minutes**

**The clerk's report dated August 18, 2010 was reviewed.**

**Motion was made by Mr. Lindquist, seconded by Mr. Campbell, to accept the Clerk's Report for August 18, 2010. All in favor. So voted.**

## **B. Treasurer's Report**

**Treasurer Murray submitted his report and highlighted the following:**

- **Month of August Profit & Loss**

**Revenue Side**

- o Total Revenue \$93,891.04 compared to a budget of \$100,760.
- o Total taxes collected \$93,722. vs. a budget of \$100,000. (last year August collections were \$11,000. compared to \$93,000. this year due to the exhilaration of the invoices being sent out)

#### **Expense Side**

- o Gas and Diesel is down vs. budget, due for the most part of the timing of invoices
- o Truck Repairs – credit received netting to \$5.37 vs. a budget of \$1,250.
- o Payroll - \$81,201. - Four pay periods this month.
- o Chief's Administrative Expense - \$990. (IAFC Conference)
- o Professional Fees – invoices totaling \$3,639. primarily to Thibodeau and Baker regarding the phase out of the inventory tax issue

Total expenses for the month \$137,388. combined with the revenue of \$93,891. running a deficit for the month of \$43,498. vs. a budget of \$35,255. therefore, \$8,243. higher deficit.

#### **• August Year-To-Date Profit and Loss**

- o Total Revenue \$121,545.
- o Total Expenses thus far \$ 397,046.
- o Items of Note
  - o Account 6020 - Truck Tires - 66% of the budget has been spent
  - o Account 6430 – Chief's Administrative Expense - 66% of the budget

**has been spent**

- **Balance Sheet**

- o **Total cash at the end of August 2010, \$149,640. down about \$7,000. from the month of July**

- o **Accrued Expenses \$174,696. (inclusive of hydrant fees) up \$44,000. from the prior month due to the deferral of paying invoices until collections begin to arrive in the month of August.**

- o **Fixed Assets off by one line - will be adjusted for next month's report**

- **NCFD 2009/2010 Payroll Overtime**

**Payroll overtime thus far for the year is about \$48,000.**

**Motion was made by Mr. Gannon, seconded by Mr. McCoy to accept the Treasurer's report. All in favor. So voted.**

### **C. Tax Collector's Report**

**Tax Collector Klara submitted his report dated September 2010. Tax collections for the month of August were higher than normal for the same month. Due to a timing issue, a tax collection deposit of \$43,000. will be reflected in next month's report.**

**Motion was made by Mr. Audette, seconded by Mr. Spaziani, to accept the Tax Collector's Report for September, 2010. All in favor. So voted.**

#### **D. Chief's Report/Monthly Expenditures**

**Chief DeVecchio submitted his monthly report for August 2010 and highlighted the following:**

- **Structure fire, 33 Iroquois Road**
- **FEMA payment received**
- **Truck 5 stabilizer jack deemed safe after inspection by C&S Specialty Inc.**
- **IAFC conference attended by he and the Deputy Chief**
- **Payment of \$1500. received from Fire Recovery for service fees**

**Motion was made by Mr. Gannon, seconded by Mr. Lindquist to accept the Chief's Report for August 2010 with expenses. All in favor. So voted.**

#### **E. Committee Reports:**

**Financial Management, Budget, Taxes**

**Mr. McCoy has discussed possible truck refinancing with Treasurer Murray.**

**Apparatus/Buildings/Grounds**

**Mr. Aharonian had nothing to report.**

**Personnel Committee**

**Grievances to be discussed in Executive Session.**

### **Labor Management/ Negotiations**

**Mr. Campbell noted negotiations are expected to begin at the beginning of the year.**

**Mr. Gannon reported no call for the Labor Management Committee to meet.**

### **F. Old Business**

#### **Mr. Paul Vandal**

**Mr. McCoy spoke with town solicitor, Mr. Hefner, and he confirmed Mr. McCoy's interpretation of RIGL 44-3-15 that allows the town council to have the tax assessor provide a total disability exemption for town property tax bills. There is no enabling legislation to allow fire districts to do so.**

**A letter of explanation was sent to Mr. Vandal August 26, 2010.**

### **Engine 5 Financing/Re-Financing**

**Treasurer Murray spoke with Navigant Credit Union regarding financing Engine 5.**

**Two options were presented.**

**5 year term rate of 3.50 – 3.75%**

**7 year term rate of 4.00 – 4.25%**

**With the current balance of the note being \$254,000., refinancing would generate some additional revenue flow into the District immediately. The downside would be paying additional interest for a longer period of time.**

**Further discussion was held off until “New Business”.**

### **State Tax Cap**

**After last month’s inquiry by resident, Arthur Lambi, Chairman LeBlanc reviewed Title 44 Taxation Chapter 44-5 Levy and Assessment of Local Taxes Section 44-5-2, and found the state tax cap does not apply to fire districts. As written, it only applies to towns and cities.**

### **Health Insurance for the Retired Chief Jesse Carpenter**

**After many failed attempts to reach retired chief Jesse Carpenter, Chairman LeBlanc is hesitant to cancel the healthcare the District is providing if in fact he does have a legal contract where the District is bound to provide him with coverage.**

**Chairman LeBlanc will seek legal counsel regarding the matter.**

**Mr. Lindquist may be able to provide the name of the attorney who was present at the time of the agreement in question.**

### **G. New Business**

**SAFER GRANT**

**Chief DeVecchio explained the SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) grant program as a program to provide direct grants to help career, volunteer and combination fire departments with staffing shortages.**

**Chief DeVecchio would like to compete for the grant to aid NCFD in meeting the NFPA minimum standard of four person staffing, utilizing the call fire fighters.**

**The Board was not opposed to competing for the Grant.**

### **Engine 5 Financing/Re-Financing**

**Chairman LeBlanc opened the floor to discuss Engine 5 re-financing.**

**Mr. Arthur Lambi, who suggested the idea of refinancing to the Board at the last meeting, expressed his desire for the Board to refinance the maximum of \$350,000. and strongly consider the 7 year option even though there will be an interest cost.**

**Mr. Peter Nigro strongly disagreed with Mr. Lambi.**

**Mr. William Dennen remembers putting money aside for a new truck in previous budgets.**

**Public discussion was closed and ensued among the Board**



regarding principal and interest payments for five (5) vs. seven (7) years and how it would affect the tax rate.

No motion was made regarding the refinancing of Engine 5.

#### **New Hires in an Alternate Pension Plan**

Arthur Lambi referencing Section 6, Page 18 of the Union Contract, which states that as of July 1, 2008 the local agrees to listen to other pension options without obligation for new hires, asked if other pension options have been proposed to new hires.

Although placed in the contract by the District, no other pension options have been proposed to the two (2) new hires since July 1, 2008.

#### **District Income & Expenses**

No question arose.

#### **“Roll-out” of State Pension**

Arthur Lambi asked if the Board would consider rolling out of the state pension during this contract year. Chairman LeBlanc advised that the retirement plan is always a negotiation item and if there is some way to reduce the retirement contributions and still provide a retirement that is fair and expectable to the fire fighters and the Union, they will.

**Mr. Lambi was advised that the District would consider capping health insurance during negotiations.**

**Chief DelVecchio commented that the District has signed a company as a third party administrator for NCFD reducing administrative costs with Blue Cross substantially. Recommendations will be made on how to reduce plan costs.**

### **Protocol for Resident Vote**

**A review of the protocol for resident vote was given by Chairman LeBlanc.**

**A special meeting can be held at the discretion of the Board or according to the By-Laws, by petition of 75 residents.**

### **H. Public Comment**

#### **Norman Bazinet**

**Mr. Bazinet questioned the number of firefighters, and the salary of the Chief and Deputy Chief.**

#### **William Dennen**

**Mr. Dennen voiced concern with overtime.**

#### **Arthur Lambi**

**Mr. Lambi question whether firefighters could vote during an annual meeting.**

**Although the question has not come up in the past, Chairman LeBlanc responded, that in his opinion, he doesn't think firefighters give up any of their rights as a member of the District because they are firefighters, other than their right to be on the Board.**

**Mr. Lambi asked if there is a mechanism in place where the taxpayers in the District could place someone on the Board, on an interim basis, before the next annual meeting. Mr. Lambi was told not unless someone resigns, in which case the position is advertised.**

**Mr. Lambi would like the Board to reconsider, for the next meeting the refinancing of Engine 5.**

**With due diligence given by the Board on this issue, Chairman LeBlanc advised Mr. Lambi the refinancing of Engine 5 would not be on next month's agenda. Mr. Lambi is welcome to introduce refinancing at the annual meeting.**

**Executive Session per R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a)(2)(9) regarding Grievances 10-04 and 10-05**

**Motion was made by Mr. Campbell, seconded by Mr. Lindquist and unanimously carried to enter into Executive Session at 8:20 p.m.**

**Return to Public Meeting**

**Adjournment**

**With no Board actions or motions coming out of Executive Session,**

**Motion was made by Mr. Lindquist, seconded by Mr. McCoy and  
unanimously carried to adjourn the public meeting at 8:37 p.m.**

**Minutes submitted by: Fay Dakake, Clerk**

**Approved                      by: Edward                      LeBlanc,                      Chairman**  
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